

THE
Nature, Guilt and Danger
OF
REBELLING
Against the
LIGHT,
Explain'd and Improv'd.
WITH
A Recommendatory Epistle
TO THE
RISING GENERATION.

By THOMAS FREKE.

JOHN III. 19.

*This is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the
World, and Men loved Darkness rather than
Light, because their Deeds were Evil.*

L O N D O N.

Printed for JOHN CLARK, at the Bible and
Crown in the Poultry, near Chancery. 1716.

Price Six Pence.





TO
The Rising GENERATION.



THE Emperour *Marcus Antoninus*, the Philosopher, was so ingenuous as to own the Advantages he received in a virtuous Course of Life, to the Liberal Education he had from his Parents and Tutors. In the first Book of his incomparable Works, he relates at large the many admirable Lessons of Morality he learned from them.

The DEDICATION.

ST. *Paul*, the Christian Heroe and Philosopher, puts his Son *Timothy* in Remembrance of the pious and holy Instructions instill'd in his tender Mind from his Grandmother *Lois*, and his Mother *Eunice*.

'Tis with an especial Regard to this View, that I address the YOUTH of both Sexes. And if the serious Perusal of this short Discourse may prove instrumental to convince and reclaim any obstinate Rebel against Light ; if They, who yet maintain the Principles of a Religious and virtuous Education, shall be more confirm'd and establish'd; all I request, is, Give GOD and his Grace the Glory, and pray for

Your sincere Friend,

March 26.

1716.

and hearty Well-wisher,

T. F.



JOB XXIV. 13.

*They are of those that rebel
against the Light.*



WHEN the LORD of the Universe stretch'd out the Heaven by his Discretion, created the vast and glorious Body of the Sun, and set it in the Firmament to give Light upon the Earth, it was not his Design, that Man, whom He made after his own Likeness, should shut his Eyes and not behold that Light, or with the Beasts of Prey, when the Sun ariseth, gather themselves together, and lay them down in their Dens.

So, when the same divine BEING erected a bright and shining Light in the Understanding of Man, call'd, *The Candle of the Lord*, and gave him from Heaven a perfect and unnerring Rule of Life, a
more

more glorious *Light*, that *shineth in a dark Place*, that *sure Word of Prophecy* contained in the Scriptures of Truth, it was not his Intent that we should continue in an affected Ignorance, and draw a Veil over our Hearts; the GOD of Heaven did not light up these two Candles, *Reason* and *Revelation*, for slothful Man to stumble in; Darknes, I confess, is a proper Season for the Beasts of the Forest to creep forth; but that the reasonable Creature should never open his Eyes, but contentedly lie down in the Den of a wilful Ignorance, now so bright a Light shineth, both within and without him, this would be to act unworthy of GOD, and unbecoming his own most excellent Nature.

WHAT shall we think then of those Persons, who have the Means of Knowledge, and are illuminated; who know the Judgment of GOD upon Sinners, and, with *Agrippa*, are almost perswaded; unto whom the *Word is nigh*, even in their *Mouths* and in their *Hearts*, yet have the Impudence to resist this Light, and act contrary to their fix'd Apprehension? Do not they deserve a Brand of Infamy and Reproach? And are not such Sins of a deep Dye?

YET, notwithstanding, we are informed by *Job*, That there were some Sinners of this Stamp in his Age, who not only

only said unto the ALMIGHTY, *Depart Job xxi. from us, for we desire not the Knowledge of thy Ways*; but were arriv'd to such a Height in sinning, as to *rebel against the Light*, and even bid Defiance to Reason, Conscience and Religion. These he ranks among the vilest of Sinners; for discoursing in the Beginning of the Chapter concerning divine Providence in permitting Wickedness to go often unpunished in this World, he gives a black List of those abominable Crimes which they committed: *Some, saith he, remove the Land-mark; they violently take away Flocks, and feed thereof; They drive away the Ass of the Fatherless; they take the Widow's Oxe for a Pledge; they turn the Needy out of the Way*; and are guilty of the basest Oppressions; nay, they were Murderers and Adulterers: But that which was the peculiar Aggravation of all their Crimes, and did in an especial Manner inhanche their Guilt, was, its being attended with Rebellion against the Light, *They are of those that rebel against the Light*, i. e. Reason and Revelation inform'd them otherwise, they knew that it was unlawful to commit such barbarous Out-rages on the Widow and Fatherless, as are here reckon'd up; of the Obliquity of these Practices, they were convinc'd in their own Consciences; although the Law was not yet given from Mount

Mount Sinai, yet the Patriarchal Religion, which they received by Tradition, was well known in those Parts, where Job lived, and in it they were forbidden to Steal, Murder, or commit Adultery; yet for all this, they did not forbear, but acted over those Sins, and so rebelled against the LIGHT, contradicting the very Dictates of their own Consciences.

Numb.
xv. 30.

THE Argument of the following DISCOURSE, shall be this; *Rebellion against the LIGHT, is justly accounted the highest Aggravation of Sin.* It was so under the Law. We read in the Book of Numbers, *The Soul that doth ought presumptuously, i. e. wilfully and knowingly; for it's opposed unto sinning through Ignorance, the same reproacheth the Lord, and that Soul shall be cut off from among his People.* It is so under the Gospel, *If I had not come, saith our Saviour, and spoken unto them, and, If I had not done among them the Works which none other Man did, they had not had Sin; their Hatred of me, had been in some Measure excusable; but now they have no Cloke for their Sin.* Those obdurate Jews had no Shadow of Reason to plead as an Excuse for their Infidelity.

Joh. xv.
23, 24.

THAT I may handle this Argument distinctly, and to some good Purpose, it will be necessary to return an Answer to two Inquiries.

I. WHAT

1. **WHAT** is to be understood by Rebellion against the **LIGHT**? that you may see who are they that come under this Denomination.

2. **WHEREFORE** is Rebellion against the **LIGHT**, justly accounted the highest Aggravation of Sin? that you may be satisfied of the Truth of the Point.

Enquiry, 1. WHAT is to be understood by Rebellion against the LIGHT? I answer, in these following Particulars.

I. It supposes that **LIGHT** is come into the World, that a very bright Glass is set before our Eyes, wherein we may behold the Glory of the **LORD** in the Perfections of Justice and Holiness, and at the same Time be inform'd of those necessary Duties He requires of us. They cannot be said to rebel against the **LIGHT**, who all their Life-time sat in Darkness and in the Shadow of Death; for this Aggravation of Sin, doth necessarily suppose a present Fruition of **LIGHT**, or at least, a Possibility of getting it; so that where either of these are wanting, where no **LIGHT** shineth, or where by all our Pains and Industry we cannot obtain the least Glimpse of it, there can be no Rebelling
B against

against it. The Light of Reason, thanks
 Prov. xx. 27. be to GOD, is universal; this *Candle of
 the Lord*, is set up in every One's Mind,
 and shines even in the Soul of a Heathen
 with a marvellous Brightness, tho' it
 must be acknowledg'd, it oft-times wants
 snuffing: But the Light of Revelation
 and Scripture is more confin'd, and as yet
 hath reach'd but very few Parts of the
 World, in Comparison of those many
 which are destitute of it. 'Tis of this lat-
 ter LIGHT, I am principally to be under-
 stood, but not without the Conjunction
 of the former, and therefore shall suppose
 both to meet together in the same Sin,
 Rebelling against the Light of Reason and
 of Revelation too.

II. THIS also is necessarily imply'd,
 That there be a Capacity of seeing and
 discerning this LIGHT. It is not suffici-
 ent to constitute Rebellion against the
 LIGHT, unless there be a Faculty given
 to behold it, and an evident Manifesta-
 tion of it in the Conscience. I do not see
 how it is criminal in an Ideot, or in One
 that hath but a poor Stock of Reason, not
 to live up to the great Rules of the Chri-
 stian Religion, tho' he dwells where it is
 taught, because of their natural Incapa-
 city; you may as well condemn a blind
 Man for Want of Judgment in his Choice
 of

of Colours, tho' the Sun shines in his Face. Thus I have gained two Points, with Respect to the Nature of Rebellion against the LIGHT; it supposes both objective and subjective LIGHT, or a Capacity of receiving it.

III. IN the Composition of this aggravated Circumstance of Sin, there must be a brisk and strong Sensation of Light; *i. e.* not only a Faculty to know, but actual Knowledge; clear Convictions of the Nature of Sin and Duty, which also may be attended with Communications of the *Holy Ghost*, a *Taste of the good Word of God*, and the *Powers of the World to come*: It is possible for such experienced Persons to sin against LIGHT, otherwise, the Apostle's Assertion of the Difficulty of *renewing them* Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. *again to Repentance*, would be absurd: But be this as it will, in every Sin against LIGHT there is always to be suppos'd a certain Persuasion of the contrary Duty; as for Instance, He that lives in Acts of Intemperance and Uncleanneſs, then rebels against the LIGHT, when he knows and is persuaded in his Conscience, that Sobriety and Chastity is his unquestionable Duty. Again, He is satisfied, that the Love of GOD, and Faith in JESUS CHRIST, are the indisputable, rightful Commands of the Gospel; but

B 2 the

the Rebel against the LIGHT, continues in his Hatred of the one, and Opposition to the other. I chuse to exemplify this in *Cain* and *Judas*; *Cain* could not but know it to be an unlawful Act to murder his Brother: *Judas* cannot be thought to be ignorant, that the Betraying of his Lord and Master, would be an unparallel'd Piece of Villany; yet notwithstanding their enlightened Minds, they imbrud their Hands in innocent Blood.

THERE are some, who in this Respect do not only sin against Conscience, which GOD hath placed as a Monitor in every Man's Breast to inform him of his Duty; but they do it also with Deliberation, and not without Disputes and Arguings. They are not yet arriv'd to such an Impudence in sinning, as to break through all the Bonds of common Grace; their Hearts are not yet so harden'd, nor their Consciences so fear'd, as to be wholly enslav'd to their Appetites, and become Vassals to brutish Lusts; they are not won by the first Offer, neither do they consent to fulfil the Sin upon the first Assault; but are drawn in after a long Deliberation, and dispute the Matter before they submit: Conscience pleads the Cause, and urges the Observance of the Command, from the Consideration of
an

an infinite Reward to the Obedient, and endless Punishments to the Disobedient, against the Insinuations of some sensual Pleasure or Profit that Sin offers. Thus there are sometimes hard Strugglings before the Temptation can prevail; nay, at the Time of the Commission, there is a secret Check and Rebuke, telling the Sinner, that GOD forbids what he is about to do; and yet he presumes to commit it. This is to rebel against the LIGHT. But,

IN the last Place, The peculiar Emphasis of this Kind of sinning, consists in the Disposition of the Person who commits it. *Israel* is call'd a *rebellious Nation*, and wherefore? Because they were *impudent Children and stiff-hearted. They refused to hear* - Ezek. ii. 3, 4. *as another Prophet represents their Case, and pulled away the Shoulder, and stopped the Ear that they should not hear; yea, they made their Heart as an Adamant-stone.* Zech. vii. 11. 12. When Men are pre-possess'd with Prejudices, and resolve not to believe and obey, but love Darkness rather than Light; yea, will not come to the LIGHT that their Deeds might be reprov'd: Tho' the Terrors of the Law fly in their Faces, Anguish fill their Hearts for their past Offences, the Furies of Hell haunt them, like so many invisible Ghosts, while they are perpetrating their horrid Villanies; yet

yet for all this, sin they will, let GOD and Conscience do their worst. This is, in the most distinguishing Manner, to rebel against the LIGHT.

Enquir. 2. WHY is Rebellion against the LIGHT justly accounted the highest Aggravation of Sin? For these Reasons.

I. THERE is more of the Nature of Sin in such Acts than in any other. Every Sin, 'tis true, is a Transgression of the divine Law; but the clearer and more distinct our Knowledge is of this Law, the greater is the Transgression: The Offence rises according to the Degree of Information; and the deeper the Impression is upon the Conscience, the more crying the Guilt; because, such offer Violence to the Principles most rooted in them. *Sin by the Commandment becomes exceeding sinful, saith St. Paul, i. e. in Proportion to LIGHT received, the Rate of Sin doth rise; For unto whomsoever much is given, of him much is required; and to whom Men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.* There are greater Degrees of Obedience and Holiness due from him that hath the Advantages of *Revelation*, than from another that hath only the Light of *Reason* to guide him; the Sins of Christians appear with a blacker Hue, than those of the Gentile World;

World; and among the former, there are some greater Sinners than others. They who know most, or have Helps and Means for Knowledge above their Neighbours, do involve themselves in deeper Guilt. So our Lord told the *Pharisees*, *If ye were blind, John ix. ye should have no Sin; but now ye say, we see, 4¹. therefore your Sin remaineth.*

II. REBELLION against the LIGHT, is utterly inconsistent with a State of Grace; *i. e.* That Man who deliberately allows himself in the Commission of such Sins, is a Child of the Devil, and not a Child of GOD: *He that committeth Sin, saith the Apostle, is of the Devil.* He that liveth in known Sin, hath the Devil for his Father. But, *Whosoever is born of God, doth not com-* 1 Joh. iii. *mit Sin, he is not ordinarily guilty of such* 8, 9, 10. *Sins: And, In this the Children of God are manifest, and the Children of the Devil.* It is certain, there are several Sins, the Commission of which is consistent with the Truth of Grace; for there is not a *Just Man upon Earth, that doeth Good and sinneth not.* The Gospel dispences with many Failings and Infirmities; but no where with such Sins as are wilfully committed against Knowledge. Tho' I do not deny, but that it is possible for a good Man to fall even into these, or at least, into Sins of a similar Nature; as is plain in *David* and

and *Peter* ; yet Instances of this Kind are so very rare, that our general Proposition, That Rebellion against the LIGHT is inconsistent with a State of Grace, is not prejudiced thereby.

III. IN these Acts of Sin there is more of a Spirit of Enmity, Opposition and Malice, than in others. The Devil appears here bare-fac'd, and shews most of his envious, revengeful Nature ; Oh ! what a Contempt do such Sinners cast upon God's Authority and Government, when they thus *run upon him, even on his Neck, upon the thick Bosses of his Buckler*, renouncing his Sovereignty, despising his Power, acting in open Defiance to him. These Rebellious Wretches have meaner Conceptions of the GOD of Heaven, than they have of their Fellow-Creatures ; they are fearless and presumptive, casting off his Law, disbelieving his Threatnings, sinning with a high Hand and a proud Heart, *Who knowing the Judgment of God, that they which commit such Things, are worthy of Death, not only do the same, but have Pleasure in them that do them.* And as such Sinners do thus reflect upon God, so likewise is their Heart full of Rage and Malice to every Thing that bears his Image. He that can break through the Convictions and Restraints of Conscience, must be an inveterate

Rom. i.
ult.

inveterate Enemy to Holiness, and declares, that he loves Sin for Sin's Sake, because it is an Abomination to G O D.

'T is observable, there are none so furiously bent against divine Truths, as those who live in Rebellion unto them; They study all manner of Ways in the first Place to enervate the Belief of them in their Hearts, to destroy their Credit and ruin their Reputation; and if after all their Amusements they cannot undeceive themselves, yet are they resolv'd to act in Opposition to those Principles, they are not able to overturn: Renegadoes and Apostates from the FAITH, have in all Ages prov'd the bitterest Persecutors of the Christian Religion. We read of *Alexander the Coppersmith, that did Paul much Hurt.* He was a desperate Adversary to the Truth, and One of the most forward in setting on the Multitude at *Ephesus* against that Apostle; yet he was once a Disciple, for he is said, *to make Shipwrack of the Faith.* 1 Tim. i. 19, 20. Such are big with Malice and Revenge against that LIGHT and the Professors of it, whom they have forsaken; therefore are justly accounted the chief of Sinners.

IV. CONSIDER the dismal Effects and Consequences of such Acts of Sin, and you will own there are terrible Aggravations attending them.

C

I. SUCH

1. SUCH Sins will destroy the Habitual Temper and Inclination of the Soul; if there be any Thing good in a Man, they will in Time erase, and pull up the Root, and so set us to begin the Work of Reformation anew; other Sins do but wound, but these kill us; the one oppose only particular Parts of the New Creature, but the other is an Enemy to all the Grace of God within us, and will infallibly blow up the very Foundation of it.

Psalm. li.
10.

David was sensible of this, when he prays in his Penitential Psalm, *Create in me a clean Heart, O God, and renew a right Spirit within me.* His Sins of Adultery and Murder were, he knew, acting against Light, since these had laid waste the good Disposition of his Soul to that Degree, as that before he could be restor'd, he must have a new Heart and a right Spirit. Thus Pernicious are such Sins.

2. THIS Course of sinning will infallibly drive away the Good Spirit from us. When Men resist the Holy Ghost, and, after the repeated Suggestions and obedient Inclinations he throws into their Souls, while the Sin is under Deliberation, resolve still to venture on it, no Wonder, that being thus griev'd He withdraws. 'Tis written of the

the Israelites, That they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit, therefore he was turned to be their Enemy, and he fought against them. Re-
belling against the Spirit, is of the same Nature with Rebelling against the Light; for it is his Office to irradiate the Mind by presenting divine Truths, in their proper Evidence; now, when we rebel against these Notices and Convictions, with which He is drawing us, we provoke Him, and make Him resolve to strive no longer with us. Upon this Account David likewise prays, in the same Psalm, Cast
me not away from thy Presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the Joy of thy Salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit. Isai. lxiii
10.
Psal. li.
11, 12.

3. REBELLION against the LIGHT, commonly issues in Hardness of Heart, and Searedness of Conscience. This is the Judgment of GOD which follows Sinners in this Life. They sin against the LIGHT so long, that at length their Minds are blinded, and their Hearts harden'd; they oppose so many Convictions, and Accusations of Conscience, that at last this Monitor ceaseth from doing his Office, and leaves the Sinner to the full Swing of his own Inclinations. This was the Case of the Gentile World, who be-
cause, When they knew God, glorified him not; Rom. i.
21, 26.

2 Theff. ii.
10, 11.

as God, but became vain in their Imaginations; were given up to vile Affections. So again, God hath threatned to send as a Judgment upon those, who received not the Love of the Truth that they might be saved, strong Delusions that they should believe a Lye, that they all might be damned, who believed not the Truth; but had Pleasure in Unrighteousness. Of this, I am perswaded, sad Experience can give us too many Instances: Have not we known them, who have broken through the Bonds of Education, have sinned against the Convictions of their own Consciences, and rebelled against approv'd LIGHT, 'till at length Darkness hath overtaken them, and they have been *past Feeling*? And if before they leave the World, their Consciences have been awaken'd, into what Horror and Despair have they been cast, so as to share in the Torments of the Damned, before their Time? 'Tis impossible to describe the Agonies and Pains, the Racks and Convulsions of Sinners, who have had some Lightning before Death. Not the Greatness of the Figure they make in the World, not the Consideration of Riches and Honours, of Pleasures and sensual Delights, have been able to drown the Sense and Conviction of them. This I conceive to be just in God upon such Sinners, who, among the whole Herd,

Hard, are the most uneasy to themselves; and such Sins sit heavier upon their Stomachs then others, with this Difference, that the one are frequently attended with pardoning Mercy, when the other are seldom, if ever.

4. HENCE it follows, That the forest Condemnation in the other World, must be their final and everlasting Portion. *This is the Condemnation, that Light is come* John iii. *into the World, but Men loved Darknes rather than Light, because their Deeds were evil.* 19. This is what will aggravate our Sin and Danger, to do Wickedness, and commit Folly in the Face of the Sun. *It shall be* Matt. xi. *more tolerable, saith our Saviour, for the* 23. 24. *Land of Sodom, in the Day of Judgment, for that Sink of Iniquity and Profaneness, than for Capernaum, where Christ taught, and wrought Miracles, but continued in Unbelief. This is the Sin that will deprive us of the Benefits of CHRIST'S Sacrifice, and of all the Blessings purchased by his Death. If we sin wilfully, saith the Au-* Heb. x. *thor to the Hebrews, after we have received* 26. *the Knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more Sacrifice for Sins. He that contemptuously transgress'd the Law of Moses, died without Mercy; there was no Sacrifice instituted for Sins of that Kind. Of how* Ver. 28, *much sorer Punishment, shall he be judged* 29. *worthy,*

worthy, who treads under Foot the Son of God, by a wilful sinning, and despising his Laws? His Judgment shall be most dreadful, being no less than all those Woes, which are denounced in the Gospel.

THESE are the several Consequences of Rebelling against the LIGHT, and the Result of them is this: That it is justly accounted the highest Aggravation of Sin.

THE Improvement of this Argument, shall be in Inferences of Truth and Duty. I begin with the Inferences of Truth.

I. ALL Sins are not equally Heinous: For, If Rebelling against the LIGHT be the highest Aggravation of Sin, then it follows, there are Sins of an inferior Guilt, and in a lower Degree criminal. Not but that every Sin is mortal; evil Concupiscence, which is but a Sin in Thought, is a Breach of the Commandment, and binds us over to Punishment. The Apostle's Aphorism is indefinite, being asserted of all Sins without any Exception, *The Wages of Sin is Death.* Yet still it's a certain Truth, what we find in the Catechism, *That some Sins in themselves, and by Reason of their several Aggravations, are more heinous in the Sight of God, than others.* Thus we may say, That Idolatry is a greater Sin

Rom. vi.
23.

Sin than Superstition; Adultery than Fornication; Murder, than Theft: And if we look into the several Agrava-
tions of Sin, we shall find, that Sins against Knowledge, are greater than those of Ignorance; Sins of wilful Presumption, than those of almost unavoidable Infirmity.

THE Aggravation of Sin, sometimes ariseth from the Person who committeth it: If he be a Professor, if he be a Minister or a Teacher of others, he is a greater Offender in GOD's Account, than a Stranger to CHRIST, or One in a lesser Form of Christianity, *Thou which teachest another, Rom. ii. teachest thou not thyself? Thou that preache- 24, 25. st, a Man shall not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayst, a Man shall not commit Adultery, dost thou commit Adultery? Thou that abhorrest Idols, dost Thou commit Sacrilege?* The Design of this Way of arguing, is not only to show the Incongruity of such Acts; but likewise that great Degree of Guilt, that such involve themselves under thereby. The Consideration of the Character of the Person, renders some Sins exceeding sinful. At other times the Aggravation of Sin, ariseth from the Circumstances attending it. If it be done publicly, and in the Face of the Sun, against a Man's enlightned Conscience, after many Reproofs, and Admonitions, followed with Vows and Resolutions of Amendment;

ment; if they be Sins which we frequently fall into, and that without any great Temptation to the Commission; then indeed, they may be called, wonderously great, because the Name of God, in an especial Manner, is blasphemed by them; Religion suffers, and its Ways are evil spoken of. Thus, all Sins are not equally heinous, neither will every Sinner be dealt with alike. There are Degrees of Punishment, proportionable to those of Guilt. *Tribulation and Anguish, shall be upon every Soul of Man that doth Evil; but of the Jew first, and then of the Gentile.* And, saith our Saviour, *That Servant which knew his Lord's Will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his Will, shall be beaten with many Stripes; when he that knew not, and did commit Things worthy of Stripes, shall be beaten with few Stripes.* I mention these Things, not to excuse the Sinner in the least; but only to let you see where your strictest Guard should be kept, and unto what Kind of Sins you should express the greatest Abhorrence, as remembering that Passage of St. Paul to the Athenians; *The Times of former Ignorance, God winked at; but now he commandeth all Men every where to repent.*

Luke xii.
47, 48.

II. THERE is a vast Difference between sinning against LIGHT, and
Rebelling

Rebelling against the LIGHT. This Distinction is necessary, to mitigate the Dread of my Doctrine; to calm those Fears of their eternal State, which may arise in some Mens Breasts, thinking themselves finally lost, ever despairing of eternal Life and Salvation, because they commit Sins against Knowledge.

BUT Sinning against LIGHT, and Rebelling against LIGHT, are different Things, and their Difference consists in these Particulars.

I. USUALLY speaking, Rebellion against LIGHT, is the Character only of desperate Sinners, of those who are given up by GOD to a reprobate Mind and vile Affections. Of this Number were the Inhabitants of the antediluvian World, concerning whom it is written, *GOD saw that the Wickedness of Man, was great in the Earth, and that every Imagination of the Thoughts of his Heart was only evil, continually.* Pharaoh, King of Egypt, might come into this List also, who harden'd his Heart against GOD, and would not be prevail'd with to let the People go, notwithstanding the Miracles *Moses* wrought in his Sight. It is plain he was convinc'd more than once in his own Conscience of the Authority of the Message sent him; yet so desperately did he harden himself in

Gen. vi. 5.

Dan. v. 22,
23.

his Wickedness as to persist in his Rebellion to the very last. I might bring in *Belshazzar*, King of *Babylon*, to this black Roll, unto whom saith *Daniel*, Thou hast not humbled thine Heart, though thou knewest all this, i. e. the divine Judgments, which overtook his Father *Nebuchadnezzar* in the Career of his Iniquity; but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of Heaven, and the God in whose Hand thy Breath is, and whose are all thy Ways, hast thou not glorified The Jews, especially the Pharisees, are the clearest Instance to my Purpose, that can be produced: *John the Baptist* calls them a Generation of Vipers; our Saviour threatens them with a greater Damnation than others, they rejected the Counsel of God against themselves, and would not come unto the Messiah, that they might have Life, tho' convinc'd by his Doctrine and Miracles, that He came from God. So that you see Rebellion against the LIGHT is the Character only of desperate Sinners, and hardened Wretches. But to sin against the LIGHT, may be the Case of God's own Children. *Noah's Drunkenness*, *Lot's Incest*, *David's Murder and Adultery*, were certainly of this Kind; nay, there is not a Sin that a Child of God commits, but what may be said to be against Knowledge through Incogitancy: they may sin against Light, when they cannot be said to rebell against it.

2. RE-

2. REBELLION against the LIGHT, is seldom if ever reclaim'd; 'tis very rare to hear of a presumptuous Sinner renewed to Repentance, they grow so impudent and shameless in sinning, as to be past Feeling, and given up to their own Destruction. We read of a persecuting Paul converted, but not of an insolent *Pharaoh*; The one did it *ignorantly, in Unbelief*, but the other sinned with a proud Heart, and with a high Hand. The one in his unregenerate State, never acted against his Conscience, but thought that he was oblig'd to be thus zealous against those that called upon the Name of JESUS; whereas the other resisted Convictions, as appears from his many Promises to let the People go. But now we have several Instances of recovering Grace in them who have sinn'd against LIGHT: I'll only mention David, whose Sins came the nearest to Rebellion of any we meet with committed by a Child of GOD, in Scripture; yet we know how he was restored to Repentance upon *Nathan's* Message to him from the LORD. GOD would not lose such an eminent Servant, rather than he should perish, divine Grace resolv'd to triumph over Man's Infirmities, to let us see that there's a vast Difference between a Rebel and a Sinner. Tho' *David* was a no-

torious Sinner, yet he cannot be called a Rebel, in the Sense I am speaking of.

3. THE Words which follow the Text will help us to another Discovery. *They are of those that rebel against the Light*; adds, the inspired Person, *They know not the Ways thereof, nor abide in the Paths thereof*. Such Sinners neither approve of the Light which they enjoy, nor walk in those Ways, to which by the same Light they are directed; and if they chance to stumble on a good Action, 'tis quickly over; like *Janah's* Gourd, the Worm of Lust kills or withers it. These Rebels are constant in Nothing so much as in Acts of Wickedness; neither Mercy, nor Judgment, Admonitions, nor Reproofs, will make them leave off their Sins; but being habituated unto them, they persist in an uninterrupted Course of Rebellion.

But now, 'tis otherwise with such as sin only against the LIGHT; they may
 Rom. vii. say, with the Apostle, *That which I do, I*
 15. *allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I*. Though they sin against LIGHT, yet it's contrary to their practical Judgment, they don't approve of those Sins they commit, neither do they live in them; but the general Course of their Conversation, is an obedient Walking with GOD. And thus it
 was

was said of *Noah*, notwithstanding his Sin of Drunkenness, He was a *just Man, perfect in his Generation, and walked with God.* Gen. vi. 9. And of *David* also it is recorded, who had been guilty of very enormous Crimes, That he *walked before God in Truth and Righteousness, and in Uprightness of Heart.* 1 Kin. iii. 6.

III. I INFER the dreadfull Condition of an Apostate, One that has left GOD, and is forsaken of Him. He is a Rebel against the LIGHT; and can he be stigmatized with a blacker Character? He's a presumptuous Sinner, and nothing remains but Hell to compleat his Misery. Apostacy, supposes former Convictions, that once there was a flourishing Profession, and a spiritual Sensation; that heretofore GOD and the Soul did converse, and Communications of Light and Love from Him kindled a Fire in his Breast; but alas! he is a Stranger now to all these Things, he is fallen from his high and honourable Station, into the Dust of the Earth, and wallows in Sensualities and carnal Enjoyments. Concerning such, saith the Apostle Peter, *Their latter End is worse than the Beginning; and it had been better for them not to have known the Way of Righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy Commandment delivered unto them.* 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21. They have perfidiously left
GOD,

God, and God hath justly forsaken them. O deplorable State! O Wretch, that thou art, thus to abandon thy Profession, and damn thy Soul! thou art already in the Suburbs of Hell, and hast not the least Degree of Hope that God will spare thee one Moment longer, *He will take them away, as a Whirl-wind, and in his Wrath*, the most terrible Vengeance written, full Cups of divine Wrath, the Blackness of Darkness for ever, is reserv'd for such Sinners. He will hurl down such Wretches into everlasting and unquenchable Fire, where there is Weeping, and Wailing, and Gnashing of Teeth.

IV. How necessary is the Operation of the blessed Spirit in the World. Notwithstanding LIGHT is come into it, yet until the Spirit opens the Eyes, and toucheth the Heart, we shall love Darkness rather than Light. The Gospel may be revealed in one Sense, and hid in another; revealed, as to its outward Dispensation and Ministry; but hid, as to its inward Power, and transforming Vertue. If the Vail which is on our Hearts be not taken away, 'tis impossible that the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, *who is the Image of God, should shine into us*. This discovers the Necessity of the Spirit's Influence, in order to make the LIGHT saving and

and effectual, it is this Spirit that takes away the Vail, it's by the same Spirit, *that we are changed into the Image of God, from Glory to Glory.* ^{2 Cor. iii. 18.} The most powerful Preaching, the most eloquent Rhetorick, would not move us to any Purpose, if the Spirit did absent from his own Institutions; nay, that we are not all of us Rebels, is owing to his victorious Grace, which makes the same Word full of Life and Power to one, that is dead and inactive to others.

V. I INFER the strong Obligation of scriptural Knowledge to Obedience. Before the Revelation of the Gospel, there was, I confess, such an Apology for Sin in the World, as did much lessen and excuse the Sinner; but since this Revelation, the Guilt of Sin is aggravated, and there remains no Excuse, nor so much as a Pretence for it; now Men have no Cloak for their Sins, as CHRIST told the Jews. For, whatsoever might seem reasonably to excuse human Actions so limited, is by the Gospel removed, and taken away; we neither want Light, to discern our Duty, nor Motives to set about the doing of what we know; we do not want Light, since we have such evident Notices of GOD and ourselves, revealed in the Gospel, as do necessarily point unto us the Christian Duty. Pagan Ignorance, and

and Jewish Blindness, is abolished, now *the Day-spring from on high has visited us*; neither do we labour under the Want of proper Motives to inforce our Duty; if either Fear or Hope can have any Influence, 'tis here, they are touch'd to the quick; for what can be more forcible to deterr from Sin, *than the Wrath of God reveal'd from Heaven, against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men?* And what more inviting to Obedience, than the Promise of a Kingdom, of an Inheritance, of an exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory.

John xiii.
17.

VI. THE highest Attainments in Knowledge, without Obedience, will but make us the more miserable. For if Rebelling against the LIGHT be the greatest Aggravation of Sin, then certainly, the more we are instructed in our Duty, the deeper will our Misery be, if we practise not accordingly. Saith our Saviour, *If you know these Things, happy are ye if you do them.* But it is better for us not to have known them, than after we have known them to live unsutable to our Knowledge. *This is the Condemnation that Light is come into the World, but they have loved Darkness rather than Light.* This is the very Essence of Men's Misery, that they live in Defiance to those Truths of which we have a convincing

vincing Evidence, and consequently the more elevated their Knowledge is, the deeper will their Rebellion sink them in everlasting Burnings. This is the Sting of the Torments of Devils, that they acted so contrary to their enlightened Judgment; and this, I believe, is the bitterest Reflection of the damned Souls in Hell; (as the *Tragædian* hath it) *Video meliora proboque, Deteriora sequor*, I knew better things when I was in the other State, I was persuaded of an Heaven and an Hell; but presumptuous Wretch! I would not be reform'd, but kept on in the broad Way; and so, that very Hell, which I knew to be the Portion of such Sinners as myself, has now overtaken me, and I am justly become a Spectacle of Shame and Reproach.

INFERENCES of Duty.

I. PRIZE the Grace of GOD, above all Natural and Moral Endowments; above all Gifts and Qualifications of *Body* or *Mind*, that do not infer a saving Change wrought in the Heart. 'Tis possible for a Man to be richly furnish'd with Knowledge and Wisdom, with a penetrating Judgment, and a sagacious Mind; he may likewise be adorn'd with a great many amiable Perfections, as to the Body; nay, he may arrive to very high Attainments

E

in

in Christianity, and yet himself not be the better Man in Reality, for all this. Learning, Ingenuity, Parts, Profession, Vivacity of Thought, Gifts of Tongues or Miracles, Beauty, Wealth and high Places, abstracted from the Grace of God, don't add any Thing of real Worth to us; we may be possess'd of all these, and yet be miserable notwithstanding. The clearest Light may be rebell'd against; the richest Blessing God bestows upon us, either in a natural, or in a moral Sense, may be abus'd and turn'd into Lasciviousness.

'Tis written of *Absalom*, *there was none to be so much praised in all Israel as he for his Beauty, from the Sole of his Foot even to the Crown of his Head, there was no Blemish in him*: Yet his Heart being destitute of the Grace of GOD, he was no better than a gilded Post, or a beautiful Sepulchre, full of Rottenness and Stench. *Ahitophel* was One of the wisest Men in those Days he lived, concerning whose Counsels 'tis written, They were as if a Man had enquired at the Oracle of GOD; and yet wanting the Fear of the LORD, which is the Beginning of Wisdom, he was a Fool, and ended his Days accordingly. What Service did Riches and great Possessions do him in the Gospel that after all was confined to the Prison of Hell from

from whence is no Redemption? Was not *Simon Magus* a Professor, did he not believe, was he not baptized, and yet at the same time *in the Gall of Bitterness, and in the Bond of Iniquity?* *Judas* that had a Devil and betray'd our Lord, was One of the Twelve, and no doubt both preach'd and wrought Miracles. So that neither external nor internal Indowments, are to be brought in comparison with the Grace of God. For 'tis this divine Quality that sanctifies these Blessings, like the *Temple* that sanctifies the *Gold*. Without the Grace of God, neither Riches, nor Wisdom nor Beauty, nor Strength, nor Gospel Privileges, will do us any Service, or yield us any Comfort, if we are destitute of it, Rebellion will unavoidably be our Guilt and Punishment,

II. KEEP a strict Watch over your own Hearts, *for the Heart of Man is deceitful above all Things and desperately wicked.* There is such a Bundle of Folly bound up in it, so many Seeds of Lust and Corruption within the best of us, that unless we are very critical in the Observation and Government of our Spirits; this Folly would soon show itself in the Life, and these corrupt feeds bring forth corrupt Fruits. Therefore the wise Man advises us, to *keep our Heart with all Diligence*; i. e. with a most constant

Jer. xxvii.

Prov. 4.

23.

stant and wary Care observe all the internal Propensions and Motions of thy Soul, whither thy Desires lean, what thy Affections are stirred by, to what thy Judgment of Things doth lead thee; be most exact in this Knowledge of thyself, and be sure to guard well all the Passes that lead into this Castle, thine Heart; for if thou shouldest suffer thyself to be surpriz'd by an Enemy either from within, or without, it would rob thee of thy Peace, and very much endanger thy everlasting State.

Mark vii.
20, to 23.

OUR Saviour upon an Occasion given him from the *Pharisees* finding Fault with his Disciples for Eating with unwashen Hands, acquaints us with this great Truth, that, *That which cometh out of a Man, only defileth the Man; for from within, out of the Heart proceed evil Thoughts, Adulteries, Fornication, Murders, Thefts, Covetousness, Lasciviousness, an evil Eye, Blasphemy, Pride, Foolishness, all these Things come from within and defile the Man.*

IF this be the Case, If all Manner of Wickedness takes its Rise from the Heart, If that be the Fountain that sends forth impure Streams; O how watchfull should we be over it! If I knew there was but one Way, by which the Enemy could break into the Fort, and at the same time that there were some within, as well as without it, that industriously fought

sought an Opportunity to betray it, would it not concern me very strictly to guard that Pass? Should I not watch and be sober when such mighty Things depend upon it? The Case is parallel with Respect to the Heart; this is the Castle, the Fort whither the Soul retires. If it be delivered up to the Enemy either thro' Treachery or Surpize, we are in a fair Way of being ruined and undone for ever.

UNDER this Head of spiritual Watchfulness, let it not be thought strange or improper that I address myself to Saints as well as Sinners; to such as obey the LIGHT, as well as those who rebel against it; be ye exhorted to keep up a strict Watch over your own Hearts, for if you do not you will soon act in Defiance to your Knowledge; there is a Proneness in the best of Christians to the worst of Sins, the Image of God is but in Part restor'd unto us in this Life, tho' Grace weakens the Body of Sin, yet it doth not quite destroy it; every good Man may complain with the Apostle, *I Rom. vii. see a Law in my Members warring against the Law in my Mind* ^{23.}; there is a carnal, sensual Bias in him swaying to Sin, contrary to the Bent and Inclination of his renewed Part, which sometimes breaks forth into actual Wickedness. Thus *Noah* is drunk,

drunk, *Lot* is incestuous, *David* murders, *Job* curses the Day of his Birth, *Moses* is cholerick and passionate, *Peter* abjures; You see these glorious Stars have had their Twinklings, and if the Leaders and Champions are thus foil'd, what may we think then hath in all Ages befallen the Croud of Vulgar Christians? It behoves us therefore, to be on our Watch; if such *Goliath's* for Strength have fallen, why should such Striplings as we, fancy ourselves secure? Let us fear least the same Corruptions and Temptations overwhelm us, this is *St. Paul's* Caution more than

1 Cor. x.

12.

Rom. xi.

20.

once, *Let him that standeth, take Heed lest he fall.* And again, *Thou standest by Faith, be not high-minded, but fear.*

III. BEWARE of the least Sin. Sins in Thought will soon produce Sins in Act, and Rebellion in the Heart, if it be not subdu'd, will issue forth in open Rebellion in the Life. Let but the Serpent put in his Head, and his whole Body will find an easy Entrance; 'tis from very small Beginnings that Sin at first takes its Rise, and the most rooted Habits have been begotten by frequent Acts. This is the Account the Apostle *James* gives of this Matter, *Every Man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own Lust and enticed:* This Lust or Desire of Evil is the first Step; then when

Chap. i.

14, 15.

Lust

Lust has conceived, it bringeth forth Sin, and Sin when it is finished, bringeth forth Death. Sin is conceived by Lust, and finished by Practice. 'Tis an Observation as true as common, *Nemo repente fit turpissimus*, No Man was ever extreemly wicked upon a sudden. A hardy Sinner, must be a Work of Time, a Creature of Industry and Toil, of Conflicts and Repulses; a Man doth not immediately become a Rebel to his MAKER, 'tis by Degrees that Sin arrives to this Perfection, there is a progressive Motion in Wickedness, as well as in Holiness. Therefore we should be careful to stop the Course of Sin in the Beginning, and beware of little Sins; for if we indulge them, what Security have we against greater? Progress in a vicious Course is (as One observes) like a Motion down Hill: Men may begin where they please; but if once they are entred, they cannot stop where they please. Vice stands upon a Precipice, *Omne in precipiti vitium stat*, saith the Poet: Altho' we may stay ourselves at the first setting out, yet we cannot in the Middle; 'tis very dangerous to consent to little Sins, to live in the Practice of them; *Whosoever*, saith our Saviour, *shall break one of these least Commandments, and shall teach Men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven.* Mat. v. 19.

IV. BEWARE of Occasions and Temptations to Sin: The Rebel in the Text, seeks for Conveniencies and Opportunities of Sinning; *The Murderer, as it follows, rising with the Light, killeth the Poor and Needy, and in the Night is as a Thief. The Eye also of the Adulterer waiteth for the Twilight, saying, No Eye shall see me: and disguiseth his Face.* On the contrary, a good Man will shun whatsoever may incite him to Sin, like the *Rechabites* of old, who would not plant Vineyards, lest they should be tempted to drink of the Wine thereof. The whole World is full of Snares and Entanglements; there is a Devil without, who is continually soliciting us by those Baits and Allurements, which, like a cunning Tempter, he throws in our Way, and there is inherent Lust, that is ready to close with the Temptation, as soon as it is offered. If we had no Sin within us, Nothing that the Devil could fasten his Temptations upon, then indeed we might, with our blessed Lord, defy him and all his Works; but when there is so much Evil of Corruption adhering to our Nature, and such violent Inclinations to what is forbidden, 'tis Presumption in the highest Degree to give Way unto them. *He that trusteth to his own Heart,*
in

John xiv.
30.

in Solomon's Esteem, is a Fool. 'Tis the most egregious Folly in the World, to trust our Hearts, after so frequent Experience of their Treachery in ourselves and others. With what Confidence can you expect the Protection of God's Grace to keep you from Sin, when you put yourselves upon Occasions and Temptations to it? And how can you pray, *Lead us not into Temptation*, when you wilfully venture upon very desperate and sore ones? Thou bold, and daring Sinner! that makest light of running into Places where are presented before thine Eyes, Variety of Objects and Opportunities for exciting Lust, and yet flatterest thyself to be Proof against the strongest of them; how dost thou know, whether God may not leave thee, as He did *Sampson*, in the Lap of a deceitful *Dalilah*; he thought to go and shake himself, as at other Times; but alas! his Strength was departed from him! I am sure, thou standest wholly at the Devil's Curtesey; and if you are overcome, you can blame none but yourself; *For can a Man take Fire into his Bosom, and his Cloaths not be burnt? Can One go upon hot Coals, and his Feet not be burnt* Tho' God hath promised to be with us in every Temptation that his wise Providence throws in our Way, He will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able; but to-

Proverbs
xxviii. 26.

Prov. vi.
27, 28.

1 Cor. x.
13.

gether with the Temptation, will make a Way to escape, that you may be able to bear it. Yet if we bring ourselves into Snares, and prove our own Tempters, it's Presumption to expect that GOD will deliver us from them.

V. AVOID the Company and Conversation of Presumptuous Sinners, of such, as rebel against the LIGHT. Example is of great Power and Force upon Men; it has a mighty Influence on human Actions, especially bad Examples; because they meet with in every Man something that is like unto it. Solomon was aware of this, when he adviseth, *Enter not into the Path of the Wicked, and go not in the Way of evil Men; avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away; for they sleep not except they have done Mischief, and their Sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall.* In this Respect, wicked Men act the Part of the Devil, they are uneasy in their Mind, and restless in their Endeavours, until they have caught some Fool in the Trap they have laid for them; they do what in them lies to promote the Devil's Kingdom among Men; they will leave no Stone unturn'd, no Method unattempted, that is likely to bring about this End; they will flatter, they will threaten; now you shall have one

Prov. iv.
14, 15, 16.

one Kind of Temptation thrown in the Way, and then another, as Opportunity presents, they are restless until they have beguiled poor Souls. Beware of these Imps of the Devil, do not make them your intimate Friends, and Bosom Acquaintance; tho' they may be pleasant and facetious, witty and good-humour'd: What is this to the Grace of GOD? Nay, the Danger is the greater of being seduc'd by such conversible Sinners; Sin slides the more easily into us, and like Fishes, we are caught by the Colour of the Fly, *He that walketh with wise Men, shall be wise; but a Companion of Fools, shall be destroyed.* Prov. xiii. 20. Methinks, you should not be fond of those Mens Conversation, how ingenious soever, whose House is the *Way to Hell, going down to the Chambers of Death.*

VI. HEARKEN to the Dictates of Conscience. Conscience is GOD's Monitor in every Man's Breast, and when it is rightly informed from the Word of Truth, we may look upon it as an infallible Rule, whoever sins against it in this Respect, rebels against the LIGHT; and it were better we had no Conscience at all, than thus to baffle and contradict it. I own, there is an erroneous Conscience; but whose Fault is it, when we have so clear a Rule to direct us? If we will not endeavour

F 2

John iii.
20.

deavour to inform our Consciences of Good and Evil, now it is in our Power, we are guilty of a great Defect; but if we act contrary to their Dictates, our Sin becomes the greater. Let us then, Revere our Consciences, so far as they are enlightned by the Scriptures; and herein, I am sure, we shall not err: *Every One that doth Evil hateth the Light, neither cometh to the Light, lest his Deeds should be reprov'd; but he that doth Truth, cometh to the Light, that his Deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God.* The first Act of Rebellion against the Light of the Gospel, begins in sinning against Conscience; and therefore when Men are weary of it's Informations, are resolved no longer to be curb'd and bridled by this Monitor, no Wonder that they become like the *Horse and the Mule, which have no Understanding.* But let it be thine own Conscience, not the Conscience of another; unless in Matters of so certain an Evidence, wherein there can be no Dispute. In the Essentials of Religion, in the first Principles of the Oracles of God, and the Doctrine of Christ, 'Tis your Duty to *obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit yourselves to them.*

Mal. ii. 7. *The Priest's Lips should keep Knowledge, and the People should seek the Law at his Mouth; for he is the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts.*

But

But in doubtful and indifferent Cases, govern yourselves according to the Dictates of your own Conscience, herein we are not to impose any Necessity upon you. One Man, saith St. Paul, esteemeth one Day Rom. xiv. above another, another esteemeth every Day a- 5. like, let every Man be fully perswaded in his own Mind. 'Tis uncharitable to judge our Brother, for that Liberty he useth, which we may think unlawful; but, hast thou Faith? have it to thyself. And him that is weak in the Faith according to our Account, we ought nevertheless to receive, but not to doubtful Disputations.

VII. BE much in Prayer for the Restraining, sanctifying, assisting, strengthening, and exciting Grace of Christ. You may possibly wonder, that I heap up so many Kinds and Degrees of Grace; but don't marvel at it, because there may be restraining, without sanctifying Grace; Thro' Shame and Fear of Punishment, a Man may keep himself from many Sins, when there is not one Dram of saving Grace in the Heart. " Restraining and
" Sanctifying Grace is very well compa-
" red, by a judicious Divine to Frost,
" and the Sun; in frosty Weather, the
" Streets are clean, free from Dirt and
" Filth, when at the same time it is but
" like a thin Crust upon the Earth, with-
" in

“ in it are all Manner of Defilements;
 “ but now the Sun dries up this Mire, and
 “ purgeth it from its Uncleanneſs”. Not
 but that conſidering our fallen State, and
 moral Pollutions, we have Reason to pray
 for reſtraining Grace, in the *Psalmiſt's*
Language, Keep back thy Servant, O Lord,
from preſumptuous Sins,

THEN again, Let us beg of God, aſſiſt-
 ing, ſtrengthening, and exciting Grace;
Noah, Job, David, Peter, no doubt, had the
Root of the Matter in them; but they ſtood
 in Need of the Aſſiſtances, Strength and
 Excitations of the Grace of GOD; if theſe
 had been vouchſafed unto them, it had
 been impoſſible they ſhould have fallen
 into ſuch groſs Sins. *Peter* conſided too
 much in his own Strength; and therefore
 it was juſt with GOD to let him fall.

VIII. If you are preſerv'd from ſin-
 ning againſt the LIGHT, if you are kept from
 ſuch enormous Crimes, into which you
 ſee, many fall, aſcribe it to the Praise, and
 Glory of divine Grace. Art thou a bet-
 ter Man than *Noah*, more perfect than
David, haſt thou greater Abilities, or
 canſt thou pretend to a ſtronger Faith
 than *Peter*? They fell, and that thou art
 not guilty of the ſame, or worſe Acts of
 Wickedneſs, is wholly owing to the
 Riches of free Grace. *Let not then the*
wiſe

wise Man glory in his Wisdom, nor the mighty Man in his Might, nor the strong Man in his Strength; but let us all acknowledge, That it is by the Grace of God, we are what we are; That we are not as bad as the vilest, as wicked as the most rebellious Wretch on Earth, is not from our selves, but due to the Grace of God, to the prevailing Intercession of the Redeemer, who hath pray'd, That our Faith might not fail in an Hour of Temptation.

IN the last Place. Be careful you do not abuse this Grace, and so provoke the Spirit of God to withdraw. St. Paul's Expression upon this Occasion is very remarkable, *'Tis God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good Pleasure.* He is a free and arbitrary Agent, and will no longer continue his Working than we co-operate with him; if we prove wanton and careless of his Operations, he will certainly strive with us no more, but leave us to the Sparks of our own Kindling.

Phil. ii.
13.

PERMIT me to leave this Observation with you as the Close of all, That if ever God shall be pleased to bring you to a Conviction of Sin and unfeigned Repentance, Sins against Light of all others will make the deepest Wound in your Conscience, fill you with the most sorrowful Remembrance, cause you to go mourn-

1 Kings
xv. 5.

mourning all the Days of your Life
prove the blackest Herauldry in your
Escutcheon. So doth the inspired Writer
reflect upon David's Conduct, He did
that which was right in the Eyes of the Lord,
and turn'd not aside from any Thing that He
commanded Him all the Days of his Life,
save only in the Matter of Uriah the Hittite.

Ep. Jude
v. ult.

NOW unto Him that is able to keep us
from falling, and to present us faultless before
the Presence of his Glory with exceeding Joy;
Unto the only Wise God, our Saviour, be as-
cribed, Glory and Majesty, Dominion and
Power, both now and ever. Amen.

E I N I S.

6 JU 65

